Bureau of Land Management
Quarterly Report
June 28, 2013

1. Route Monitoring and Compliance

a. Monitoring Compliance with Route Closures at a Statistically Significant Level –– Update from March 2013 Quarterly Report

The pilot test of the methods and data for the statistical monitoring protocol was field tested in the Black Mountain Subregion in April 2013. The field test identified several changes needed to the draft monitoring protocol (see Pilot Test Summary document for more information on changes identified). Prior to finalizing the monitoring protocol, the Plaintiffs were provided an informational briefing on May 23, 2013. The final WEMO OHV Monitoring Protocol is attached and was provided to the Plaintiffs on June 10, 2013. The Plaintiffs did not provide written comments on the statistical monitoring protocol.

Pursuant to the Final OHV Monitoring Protocol, monitoring of designated routes will occur over a 3-year monitoring cycle with a random sample of routes selected in the first year of monitoring and spread out over three years, sampled sequentially. BLM will develop monitoring memos following monitoring activities conducted in years 1 and 2, with a complete monitoring report produced after monitoring is completed in year 3. BLM will report on these efforts through the filing of quarterly status reports.

The first year of monitoring will commence in July 2013 (e.g., route stratification, random sample selection from each stratum, data upload to GPS Units, and staff training) with field implementation of the statistical sampling monitoring protocol to begin by August, 2013; BLM will inform Plaintiffs once the specific field implementation start date is identified.

Information gathered from implementation of the statistical sampling monitoring protocol, and the monitoring information gathered to date will be used in the development of a monitoring plan to be incorporated into the WEMO reassessment. In addition, this information will be used by the BLM in its adaptive efforts to avoid, minimize, mitigate, and curtail unauthorized OHV use in the WEMO plan area.

b. Summary of Monitoring/Enforcement Effort – Update from March 2013 Quarterly Report

Law Enforcement Overview
Law Enforcement (LE) Rangers in the Barstow and Ridgecrest Field Offices conducted 435 compliance checks (e.g., wilderness, Area of Critical Environmental Concern, cultural sites) and 307 enforcement contacts, of which 132 pertained to off route or closed area motor vehicle violations.

Monitoring of Vehicle-Limited Use Routes
A law enforcement emphasis patrol in the Juniper Flats Subregion occurred in May 31-June 2, 2013. The Patrol was coordinated with local law enforcement agencies, including San Bernardino Sheriff's Office, United States Forest Service and San Bernardino Code Enforcement. Public use of the area was lower than normal. Law enforcement personnel made 44 contacts, and issued nine (9) warnings and three (3) citations.

In addition, the Friends of Juniper Flats are continuing to assist BLM with monitoring of the Juniper Flats Subregion by providing reports of their observations of unauthorized OHV activity. BLM Law Enforcement Rangers are responding to these reports and taking appropriate action.

The Friends of Jawbone staff continues to perform daily monitoring and rehabilitation of unauthorized routes within the Jawbone Subregion, as well as ground operation and maintenance work, including signing, grading roads, and repairing structures that have been vandalized.

Monitoring of Pacific Crest Trail (PCT)
On April 27, 2013 and May 25-26, 2013, law enforcement emphasis patrols were conducted on the PCT to assess compliance with the non-motorized route designation. No OHV activity was observed on the trail. Some of the hikers contacted did report having observed OHV tire tracks crossing the PCT in several locations, but not along the trail.

c. Maintenance and Restoration Actions – Update from March 2013 Quarterly Report

Barstow Field Office
In the Juniper Flats Subregion, a vehicle restricting gate was installed on JF 3355M (see photos below), as well as signs and 1,500 feet of post and cable fencing. Additionally, repairs were made to vandalized sections of post and cable fencing along Arrastre Creek.

Before: JF3355M

After: JF3355M

Ridgecrest Field Office
The four Student Conservation Association (SCA) Restoration teams hosted in Ridgecrest completed their 6 to 8 months of service time in May 2013. Their efforts focused on completing restoration efforts within the Jawbone and Rand Mountain Subregions. In addition, there were

efforts to reduce vehicle trespass into the Owens Peak, Kiavah, Golden Valley, and Grass Valley Wilderness areas along with monitoring and re-treating previous work efforts within the El Paso Mountains Wilderness. Tasks crews performed included vertical mulching, seed pitting, signing, erosion control structures, berms, and hard barriers including fencing. These teams' efforts resulted in 223 sites being restored, totaling 12.44 miles in length and 11.66 acres of land. Additionally, the SCA teams constructed 4.28 miles of fence. The SCA team cumulatively performed public outreach, contacting 2,330 members of the public as the public recreated on BLM lands.

In addition to the work performed by the SCA crews, BLM staff completed 1.56 miles of designated route trail tread repair on route P140 within the WEMO area.

2. Kiosks – Update from March 2013 Quarterly Report

Barstow Field Office
BLM continues to coordinate with interested organizations to address public education on the OHV route network in key areas. For example, one of our partners, The Habitat Conservancy, coordinated with BLM to install an additional kiosk off of Highway 395 north of Kramer Junction and south of Red Mountain on lands purchased by the State and now under conservancy management. This kiosk directs users to the designated network in the Fremont Desert Wildlife Management Area and educates them on the sensitivity of the area. Additionally, BLM is coordinating with San Bernardino Code Enforcement, County of San Bernardino, and the Citizens of Wonder Valley (COW) to design informational material and install a kiosk at the intersection of Highway 247 and Richie Road, near Landers, California.

Ridgecrest Field Office
The ten proposed information kiosks identified in the December 21, 2012, Quarterly Report were constructed and installed by contract employees utilizing OHV grant funding. One kiosk location in the Middle Knob Subregion was changed from MK24 to the intersection of MK25 and MK55 as it was determined to be a better point of entry for signing.

Barstow and Ridgecrest Field Offices
BLM personnel continue to work on the upkeep and repair of the existing kiosks located throughout the West Mojave planning area. Efforts performed include replacing subregion maps (with court mandated language), posting of notices, painting, and structural repairs.

3. Proper Functioning Condition – Seeps and Springs – Update from March 2013 Quarterly Report

From April to June 14, 2013, 20 Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessments were completed within the WEMO planning area. Table 1 shows the results of the PFC assessments.

Table 1. Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Assessments Conducted from April – June 14, 2013 on the Barstow and Ridgecrest Field Offices			
Barstow Field Office			
General Area	**Name**	**Finding**	**Notes**
Rattlesnake Canyon Subregion	Burns Spring	Functional At Risk; static trend	Spring bifurcated by Burns Canyon Road; county maintained road provides access to residences up canyon
Morongo Valley Subregion	Sherman Shady Spring	Functional At Risk; static trend	Adjacent property owner trespass
Rattlesnake Canyon Subregion	Bighorn Mountain Cherry Stem Spring	Functional At Risk; static trend	Grazing and camping; post no camping signs and continue to remove cattle from the Duncan Flat area.
Juniper Flats Subregion	Lower White Knob Spring #1	Functional At Risk; static trend	Salt Cedar
Juniper Flats Subregion	Lower White Knob Spring #2	PFC	
Juniper Flats Subregion	White Knob Tailings Spring	PFC	
Ridgecrest Field Office			
El Paso Mountains	Shelley Spring	Nonfunctional	Salt Cedar
El Paso Mountains	Bob Spring	Nonfunctional	Salt Cedar
El Paso Mountains	Sheep Spring	PFC	
El Paso Mountains	Louise Spring	PFC	
El Paso Mountains	Petroglyph Spring	Functional At Risk	Salt Cedar
El Paso Mountains	Holland West	Nonfunctional	Channelization of streambed
El Paso Mountains	Holland South	Nonfunctional	Salt Cedar
Rudnick Allotment	Hoffman Spring	Functional At Risk	Head Cut, lack of recruitment (reduced flow due to drought conditions)
Kelso Peak Allotment	Cabin Creek	PFC	
Kelso Peak Allotment	Cortez Creek	PFC	
Rudnick Allotment	Nudist Spring	PFC	
Rudnick Allotment	Sage Canyon Creek	Functional At Risk	Lack of recruitment due to grazing
Rudnick Allotment	Boulder Canyon Creek	PFC	
Rudnick Allotment	Sage Canyon Spring	PFC	

4. Air Quality – Update from March 2013 Quarterly Report

A report was prepared by the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) in April 2013 at the request of the California State Office, BLM (see attached West Mojave Air Quality Evaluation Report). The report responds to four items:

- What are the types of emissions within the WEMO Planning Area;
- How are those emissions monitored;
- Summarize the existing monitoring data; and,
- Discuss the existing monitoring network's ability to monitor off-highway vehicles and Open Areas.

The report concludes that emissions generated by OHVs and OHV Open Areas are minor contributors to regional pollution.

The WEMO Planning Area includes all or portions of five air quality districts including the MDAQMD, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District, East Kern Air Pollution Control District, the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

Air districts have statutory responsibility, in conjunction with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), to monitor air quality data (California Health and Safety Code §39607), with the intent of monitoring the public health, safety, and welfare, including, but not limited to, health, illness, irritation to the senses, aesthetic value, interference with visibility, and effects on the economy (H&SC §39606(a) (2)). This responsibility includes all lands within the State, except for Tribal lands. The WEMO Planning Area air districts (and CARB) operate an extensive ambient air quality monitoring network of 46 monitors in or adjacent to the WEMO Planning Area to meet this statutory requirement.

Emissions within the WEMO Planning Area are currently tabulated by the CARB and air districts for State and Federal air quality planning and health purposes. These include the six National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) criteria pollutants which are: Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10}), Fine respirable Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$), Oxides of Sulfur (SO_X), Ozone (O_3). Additionally, Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) and Toxic Air Compounds (TACs) are also monitored, from facility inventories only.

To summarize the monitoring data, mobile sources dominate ozone precursor emissions, SOx emissions are relatively minor, and area sources (individual small sources within a large area) dominate particulate emissions. OHVs and OHV Open Areas are minor contributors to regional pollution, and are monitored by *regional scale* monitors by definition. The contribution of OHV use and OHV Open Area emissions near population centers are also monitored by the *neighborhood scale* monitors covering those population centers. The existing ambient air monitoring network in the WEMO Planning Area meets all Federal, State and local ambient air

monitoring requirements, including monitoring ambient impacts from OHVs and OHV Open Areas.

5. Mojave Fringe-Toed Lizard – Update from March 2013 Quarterly Report

Barstow Field Office
MFTL surveys were conducted between May 8 and May 31, 2013. Five geographic areas (Yermo, Manix, Rasor, Twentynine Palms, and Dumont Dunes) were surveyed, including eight parcels within the MFTL Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Each parcel was sampled using 750-meter transects. Detections of MFTL and Zebra tailed lizards (*Callisaurus draconoides*) were recorded. Data was recorded using GPS technology, including notes describing habitat conditions and perennial plant community type. Major perennial shrubs were identified at each site.

A total of 30 transects were walked, and the results of the survey were mapped using ArcGIS 10. Temperatures ranged from 21° C to 55° C. MFTL were encountered at Yerbo 3, Manix 3, Twentynine Palms, and Dumont Dunes. This is in contrast to the 2012 surveys at Yermo 1 where three MFTL were detected. MFTL were not detected at Yermo 2 in 2012 or 2013. The surveyor detected 16 MFTL and 25 Zebra tailed lizards. Seven MFTL were encountered off transect during surveys of the ACEC parcels (NOTE: Dumont Dunes is not an ACEC parcel). Fewer lizards were encountered at Dumont Dunes. This is due in part to fewer transects walked and some transects occurring on the edge of suitable habitat. The survey results for 2012 and 2013 are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of Mojave Fringed-toed Lizard (MFTL) 2012 and 2013 Survey Transects and Detections for Nine Parcels of Land Located within the Barstow Field Office

Location	2012 Number of Transects	2013 Number of Transects	2012 Number of MFTL Detections	2013 Number of MFTL Detections
Yermo 1	4	5	3	0
Yermo 2	2	2	0	0
Yermo 3	4	1	3	1
Manix 1	0	1	n/a	0
Manix 2	0	1	n/a	0
Manix 3	0	5	n/a	2
Rasor	0	1	n/a	0
Twentynine Palms	0	5	n/a	4
Dumont Dunes	not recorded	9	14	9

The following is the habitat assessment for the Manix, Rasor, and Twentynine Palm parcels for MFTL. Plant communities outside the Mojave River channel are typically a creosote bush-burrobush plant community. In the Mojave River channel, desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) is the dominant plant species. Salt cedar (*Tamarisk ramosissima*) occurs sporadically throughout portions of the river channel.

Sand habitats vary throughout the study areas. The prevailing winds distribute sand in an easterly direction for all the parcels surveyed. Many factors may play into the development of sandy habitats including ground water, mountain slopes and foothills, and open ground. Large sand deposits occur near ground water in alkali sinks or the edge of dry lakebeds and at the base of mountains or mountain slopes.

Shallow sand layers are spread downwind of sand dunes or across flat ground. Sand deposits may form as a continuous layer or as sand hummocks forming at the base of shrubs. Hummocks may be very large as in the Mojave river channel where sand builds up against desert willows or they can be small building up on perennial shrubs on the upland. The branches of willows can capture a large amount of sand though these hummocks may not by themselves constitute MFTL habitat.

A description of the habitat at the Manix, Rasor and Twentynine Palms parcels is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Description of the Habitat at the Manix, Rasor, and Twentynine Palms Parcels

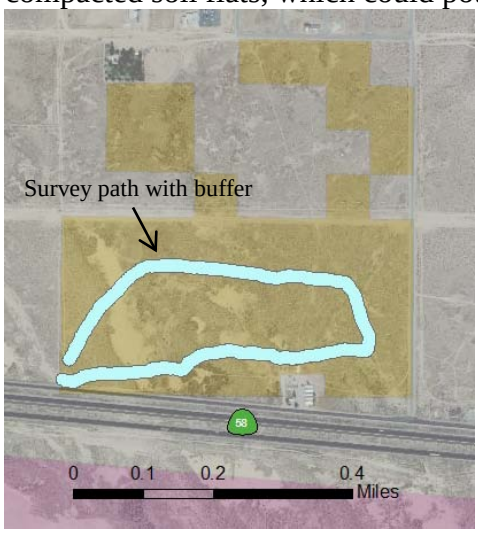
Location	Description of Habitat
Manix 1	Large sand deposits occur on the east slope of ridgeline on the inner bend of the river channel. There is a shallow layer of sand along the south bank (west side of the parcel) of the Mojave River.
Manix 2	On the west side, sand deposits occur along the north and south river banks of the river channel. There is a vegetated sand bank on the east side of the parcel.
Manix 3	This parcel has three one square mile parts. The only sand in the southwest parcel is in the river channel where one MFTL was incidentally encountered. Sand deposits occur in shallow layers along the southern portion of the middle parcel. Large sand hummocks have developed on desert willows in the river channel of the eastern parcel.
Rasor	The ACEC parcel adjacent to the Rasor OHV Open Area is also located in a wide braided channel of the Mojave River. Sand forms very large hummocks on desert willow while the space between sand hummocks is coarse materials. There is no continuous sand habitat on this ACEC parcel.
Twentynine Palms	This ACEC parcel is very large and includes two field office jurisdictions. The western portions occur adjacent to a large alkali sink. On the edge of the sink are sand dunes.

Ridgecrest Field Office

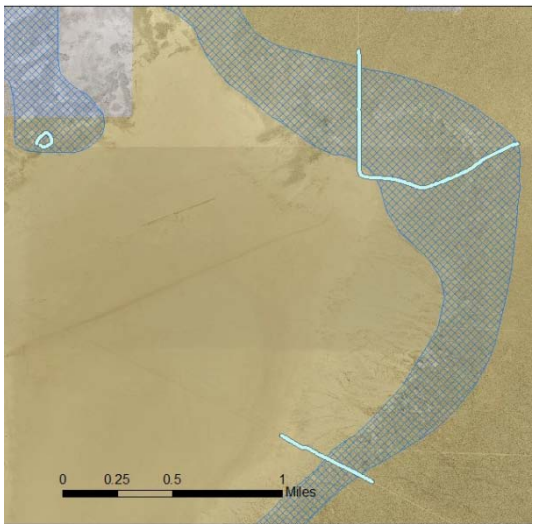
The Ridgecrest Field Office surveyed four parcels of potential MFTL habitat for presence/absence. These sites were identified as potential habitat locations by United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as part of their 2012 MFTL Endangered Species Act listing decision. All surveys were performed by personnel familiar with MFTL appearance and

appropriate habitat conditions. Additionally, all surveys were conducted during morning hours when detection is most probable and in accordance with established survey protocols: when sand surface temperatures are within normal parameters for MFTL activity (90-120° F), and when the constant wind speed is below 20 mph. The survey area (in acres) was calculated as a 15m (~50ft) buffer to either side of the survey track.

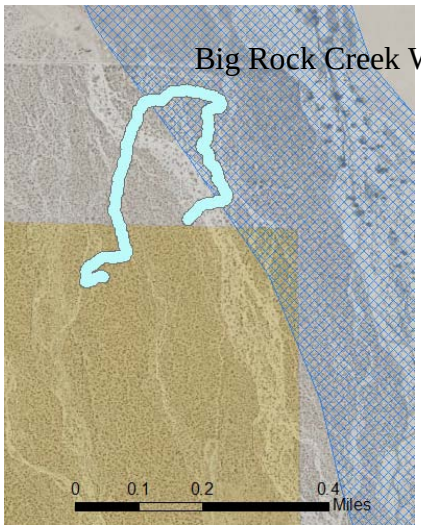
Edwards North: An isolated 112-acre parcel along CA-58 and the northern boundary of Edwards Air Force Base that was identified by USFWS. Approximately 12.5 acres were surveyed at this location on the morning of May 31, 2013, and no suitable habitat was found. The area consists of creosote and salt bush assemblage dispersed between unvegetated compacted soil flats, which could potentially resemble dunes from aerial imagery.



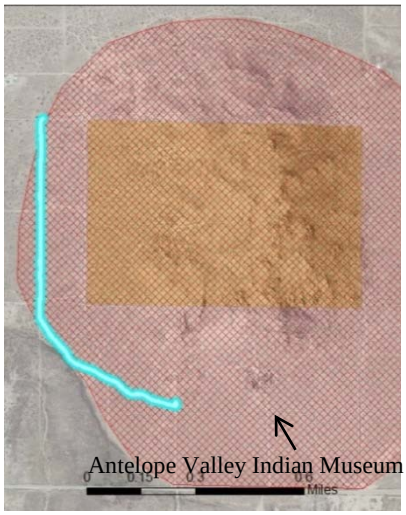
Cuddeback Dry Lake Bed: Approximately 2,200 acres along the northern and eastern edges of Cuddeback Dry Lake was identified as potential habitat by USFWS. Approximately 25 acres were surveyed at this location on the morning of May 31, 2013, and no suitable habitat was found. The area consists of largely salt bush scrub assemblages adjacent to barren playa, with no low-compaction wind-blown sand deposits.



Big Rock Creek Wash: Big Rock Creek Wash is a highly diverse wash extending 20 miles north from the San Bernardino National Forest. USFWS designated approximately 8 miles of the wash as potential MFTL habitat as it is within close proximity to extirpated sites such as Saddleback Butte State Park to the northeast, and BLM manages a 300 acre parcel adjacent to the wash. Approximately 10 acres were surveyed on the morning of June 6, 2013, however no MFTLs or significant sign was observed. The wash is composed of granitic fluvial sands, interspersed with gravel and rocks, and is not composed of the loose Aeolian sand deposits required for MFTL occupancy.



Piute Butte: A 250 acre parcel on Piute Butte, directly adjacent to the Antelope Valley Indian Museum, which was designated as extirpated for MFTL by USFWS. This site contains ideal dune and blow-up habitat; however, the lizards have most likely become locally extirpated due to environment conditions due to successive years of intense drought. Approximately 12 acres were surveyed around the edge of the parcel on the morning of June 6, 2013, and no MFTLs or sign was observed.



(Image of Piute Butte from www.peakery.com)

6. Status of Planning

The Notice of Intent (NOI) for the West Mojave Travel Management Project was issued on September 9, 2011, and scoping closed on April 15, 2012. Funding was received to review public comment and prepare the scoping report, which was posted on the project website on June 25, 2012. An initial inventory of linear features was initiated in late 2011 and completed in December, 2012. The inventory was posted on the project website as it was completed. In September 2012, funding was redirected from other programs to develop the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and a contractor was selected. Funding received at that time was sufficient for development of a database to document the application of the minimization criteria and completion of the Draft Plan Amendment/Draft EIS. Additional funding for preparation of the travel management plans was received in June 2013, and a funding request was also submitted to the Washington Office for completion of the Final EIS. Publishing of the Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS is anticipated by October 2013.

7. Chronology of Management Actions – Update to March 2013 Quarterly Report

April 8 – April 16, 2013: BLM field tested the monitoring protocol variables over a total of 60 miles within the Black Mountain Subregion.

May 2, 2013: An Amended Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register to clarify the scope of analysis for WEMO.

May 3, 2013: A meeting with the Alliance for Responsible Recreation, including Plaintiff, which included a briefing on the status of WEMO.

May 23, 2013: A telephone conference call to brief Plaintiffs on the monitoring field test and the status of the WEMO OHV monitoring protocol.

June 8, 2013: The California Desert District Advisory Council (DAC) accepted the Findings and Recommendations Report prepared by the WEMO Route Network Project Subgoup. The DAC also accepted dissenting comments to the Subgroup Report. The WEMO Subgroup spent 15 months examining transportation issues within the eight WEMO Transportation Management Areas and conducted extensive public outreach.

June 10, 2013: The WEMO OHV Monitoring Protocol was transmitted to the Plaintiffs.

June 21, 2013: Funding request submitted to the Washington Office for Fiscal Year 2014 WEMO implementation.

June 25, 2013: Secured funding to complete the Final Plan Amendment/EIS and develop eight (8) transportation and travel management plans.

June 25, 2013: Field trip with three members of the Friends of Juniper Flats to discuss hiking opportunities within Juniper Flats Subregion, and management of motorcycle routes (designated and illegal), riparian areas and Juniper Flats ACEC.

8. Attached Files
Pilot Test Summary
WEMO OHV Monitoring Protocol Final
West Mojave Air Quality Evaluation Report, April 2013